

MCLB ALBANY SAFETYGRAM

American



Heart Month

February is Heart Month: Make Control Your Goal

Uncontrolled high blood pressure is a leading cause of heart disease and stroke. In fact, more than 67 million Americans have high blood pressure. People with high blood pressure are 4 times more likely to die from a stroke and 3 times more likely to die from heart disease, compared to those with normal blood pressure.

High blood pressure often shows no signs or symptoms, which is why having your blood pressure checked regularly is important. It's easy to get your blood pressure checked. You can get screened at your doctor's office and drugstores or even check it yourself at home, using a home blood pressure monitor.

If you know you have high blood pressure, take these steps to help get it under control:

- ♥ **Ask your doctor what your blood pressure should be.** Set a goal to lower your pressure with your doctor and talk about how you can reach your goal. Work with your health care team to make sure you meet that goal and keep track of your blood pressure over time.
- ♥ **Take your blood pressure medicine as directed.** Set a timer on your phone to remember to take your medicine at the same time each day. If you are having trouble taking your medicines on time or paying for your medicines, or if you are having side effects, ask your doctor for help.
- ♥ **Quit smoking—and if you don't smoke, don't start.** You can find tips and resources at CDC's Smoking and Tobacco website.
- ♥ **Reduce sodium intake.** Most Americans consume too much sodium, which can raise blood pressure. Click here to read about ways you can reduce your sodium and visit the Million Hearts® [Healthy Eating & Lifestyle Resource Center](http://www.cdc.gov/features/heartmonth) for heart-healthy, lower-sodium recipes, meal plans, and helpful articles.

<http://www.cdc.gov/features/heartmonth>

Risk Management 639-5249

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